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A BRYAN BIRTHDAY SPEECH

Synopsis of W. R. Crabtree's address at Bryan's birthday banquet at Chattanooga, Tenn., March 19, 1914:

It is astonishing how opinions change. In our youth while the memory of the suffering and humiliation of reconstruction was fresh in our minds, we thought of Abraham Lincoln as the incarnation of all that was vicious and intolerant and wrong in politics and government. As a boy I thought that Lincoln had horns and a tail and cloven hoofs. With the passing of time and prejudice, and with broader knowledge of the man and his motives and work, we have learned to look upon him in a different light. We know now that he was a leader for right in the eternal struggle between right and wrong. We know that he was kindly and tolerant and good, and we believe if his life had been spared, our country would not have suffered the degradation and horror of reconstruction.

So with the great man we honor tonight. During the campaign of 1896, and later, many of you who are present here, looked upon him as a demagogue and the incarnation

of all that was destructive and demoralizing and wrong in our politics. But as you have seen his stand for principle; as you have seen him sacrifice ambition by preaching the gospel of righteousness ahead of public sentiment; as your knowledge of the man has grown, and, perhaps, as your own conscience has been quickened, you now acknowledge that he is right in most of the contentions; that he is sincere and that he is the highest type of that class of public men, who place duty above pleasure, and justice above expediency.

There is a lesson in our meeting here tonight to celebrate the birthday of this living man.

Others have held more exalted offices.

Others have been more often victorious.

Others are as gifted intellectually.

Others walk as uprightly and are governed by as high moral ideals.

Others have perhaps equal oratorical ability.

But we have never met to thus honor these others.

In my opinion, Mr. Bryan is loved and honored here and elsewhere more than others not so much so on

account of his high character and great abilities, as on account of the universal recognition of his leadership of democracy in the world-wide struggle as old as history between democracy and plutocracy.

He is great because as the champion of the people he has always stood as a stone wall against the encroachments of the powerful and selfish few.

It is for this reason that his fame as an advocate of the rights of humanity extends to the uttermost parts of the world wherever the endurance of the inequalities of life has stirred the oppressed to a desire to live and breathe and think as men.

No one holds a brief to speak for Mr. Bryan, but it may be interesting to speculate a little as to what his position would be upon some of the problems in state government in Tennessee, if he were a citizen of Tennessee.

We know his principles and record, and with this knowledge it cannot be presumptuous for us to say what we think he would favor and oppose in the way of reforms, and in the correction of evils in our state.

We know he stands always for genuine democracy—the rule of the people. He would favor in Tennessee a primary law that would insure fair and free expression in the selection of party candidates. He would oppose the old time boss controlled mass conventions for nominations; he would favor the prohibition of campaign contributions from corporations and private interests that thus seek to control party action.

He would oppose the participation of these corporations and interests through their paid attorneys and representatives in party affairs and government.

He would favor a public service commission in Tennessee with absolute authority to regulate rates and service, and prevent the issuance of watered stocks and bonds.

He would oppose the powerful lobby maintained by those interests to prevent such legislation.

He would favor the elimination from politics and government of the predatory interests and prevent them from using the party machinery and the powers of the party for private purpose.

He would destroy the influence of privilege seeking corporations, in our party in Tennessee, just as he destroyed the influence of the Morgans and Ryans and Belmonts and Murphys, in our last national democratic convention.

He would be the enemy of such schemes as are now being hatched behind closed doors and in secret conferences by would-be bosses in Tennessee.

In a word we know Mr. Bryan would be governed by principle and not by policy, that he would favor right and oppose wrong in whatever shape it developed itself in Tennessee.

AS CHINA SEES THE WHITES

In his book, "The Chinese Revolution," Arthur J. Brown reprints a paragraph written by a Chinese who had seen much of Europeans and North Americans at Shanghai.

"We are always told that the countries of the foreign devils are grand and rich," the Chinese observed, "but that cannot be true else what do they all come here for?"

"They jump around and kick balls as if they were paid to do it. Again you find them making long tramps into the country; but that is probably a religious duty, for when they wave sticks in the air nobody knows why. They have no sense of dignity, for they may be found walking with women. Yet the women are to be

pitted too. On festive occasions they are dragged around a room to the accompaniment of the most hellish music."

Another interesting paragraph is from the pen of a Chinese who had just returned from a tour of Europe and North America. He wrote to a relative as follows:

"You cannot civilize these foreign devils. They are beyond redemption. They will live for weeks and months without touching a mouthful of rice, but they eat the flesh of bullocks and sheep in enormous quantities. That is why they smell so badly. They smell like sheep themselves. Every day they take a bath to rid themselves of their disagreeable odors, but they do not succeed. Nor do they eat their meat cooked in small pieces. It is carried into the room in large chunks, often half raw, and they cut and slash and tear it apart. They eat with knives and prongs. It makes a civilized being perfectly nervous. One fancies himself in the presence of sword-swallowers. They even sit down at the same table with women, and the latter are served first, reversing the order of nature."



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